

# ARIZONA METH PROJECT

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## **New Survey Demonstrates Increased Awareness of the Dangers of Meth Use** *94 percent of Arizona teens now see great risk in trying methamphetamine once*

**PHOENIX — June 11, 2008** — A new statewide survey has found that teens' attitudes toward the dangers of methamphetamine use have shifted substantially since the ARIZONA METH PROJECT initiated the first wave of its meth prevention campaign in 2007. Compared to the 2007 benchmark survey—conducted prior to the launch of the Project's "Not Even Once<sup>®</sup>" campaign—the new results show that teens are now much more aware of the negative consequences associated with meth use and are significantly less inclined to see benefits in taking meth. The survey also revealed that, for the first time, teens view meth as the most dangerous substance, even riskier than heroin, cocaine, and marijuana.

The 2008 survey shows teens are more acutely aware of the specific dangers of first-time meth use as their perceptions of benefits and risks of meth changed as much as 26 percent in the past year. Increases in perceptions of "great" risk in trying meth "once or twice" were reported in nearly all risk areas measured including: getting hooked (94 percent, up 5 points), becoming someone you don't want to be (89 percent, up 8 points), dying (83 percent, up 8 points), and becoming violent (81 percent, up 7 points).

Teens are also now more likely to disagree with certain benefits of meth. Changes were seen as teens more readily reject the notion that the drug makes you happier (67 percent), gives you increased energy (69 percent), and helps you lose weight (49 percent).

"Increasing awareness of the huge risks is fundamental to stopping meth use, and the ARIZONA METH PROJECT has done an outstanding job in that capacity," said Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard and co-chair of the ARIZONA METH PROJECT.

"Given the increasing costs of Meth use on our criminal justice system and our society as a whole, we are excited to see the ARIZONA METH PROJECT is having an impact on attitudes and awareness," said Maricopa County Supervisor Don Stapley and co-chair of the ARIZONA METH PROJECT. "By continuing this important message, we look forward to changing behaviors and saving money in long-term incarceration costs."

"This data demonstrates the ARIZONA METH PROJECT is making progress in changing teens' attitudes toward meth," said Dr. Judy Krysik, associate professor in the ASU College of Public Programs School of Social Work. "Teens report the Project's ads are not only impactful and informative, but make them less likely to try meth. Teens now see the drug carries greater risk and less benefit than previously thought."

The survey results indicate TV, radio, and billboard ads prompt nearly half of parents to communicate with their teens about meth. In the past year, 86 percent of parents report having discussed meth with their teen and 52 percent of the time these discussions were prompted by a TV or radio advertisement.

Targeting youth ages 12-17, the ARIZONA METH PROJECT reaches 70 percent to 90 percent of that target audience three to five times a week with a hard-hitting message. Overall the campaign broadcast over 32,000 TV, radio, billboard, print and Internet advertisements. Most teens (91 percent) report recently having seen or heard

anti-meth advertising and many cite TV, radio, billboards, and posters as valuable sources of information about meth.

The majority of teens “strongly agree” the ARIZONA METH PROJECT’s ads show that meth is dangerous to try just once (80 percent), will make you act in a way you would not want to (84 percent), is more dangerous than they had originally thought (78 percent), and affects many people’s lives besides the user’s (74 percent). Teens “strongly agree” that the ads make them less likely to try or use meth (76 percent), help them understand that you can’t try meth even once (78 percent), and make them more aware of the risks of using meth (74 percent).

The *Arizona Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* is conducted to track attitudes and behaviors related to methamphetamine in Arizona. The *2008 Arizona Use & Attitudes Survey* was conducted from March 24 through April 1, 2008, by Roper Public Affairs, a nationally recognized survey research organization. This consumer-focused, market research is the largest meth-related attitudinal tracking study in the state. The survey group consists of over 1,212 respondents among three key groups: teens, young adults, and parents of teens. At the 95 percent confidence level margins of error for each of the three populations is, on average +/-5 percentage points.

Findings from the *2008 Arizona Meth Use & Attitudes Survey* indicate that there have been shifts in attitudes toward methamphetamine among Arizona teens since the ARIZONA METH PROJECT initiated its public education campaign. Compared to the 2007 Benchmark Survey, conducted prior to the launch of the Project, Arizona teens are more aware of the dangers of taking meth, and they are less likely to see any benefit in taking the drug. For the complete report, please visit [www.arizonamethproject.org](http://www.arizonamethproject.org).

#### **About the ARIZONA METH PROJECT**

The ARIZONA METH PROJECT is a large-scale prevention campaign aimed at significantly reducing first-time Meth use in Arizona. The campaign primarily targets middle- and high-school students, and young adults ages 18 to 24. The ARIZONA METH PROJECT mass media prevention campaign compliments the work of existing anti-Meth coalitions and community-based education and treatment programs. The ARIZONA METH PROJECT is overseen by the ARIZONA METH PROJECT Board, comprised of appointees from participating counties, as well as expert representatives from the treatment, tribal, education, media, medical and business communities. The ARIZONA METH PROJECT implements the graphic Meth Project advertising campaign, which according to the Montana Attorney General's Office helped reduce teens' Meth use by nearly 50 percent in Montana through a series of graphic and vivid advertisements and TV spots viewable at [www.methproject.org](http://www.methproject.org). Meth use among Arizona teens is 4.3 percent almost twice the national average according to the 2006 Arizona Youth Survey. The Arizona campaign began in April 2007, funded entirely with public support. It has launched an aggressive fundraising effort in order to sustain the anti-Meth message, through public-private partnership. To donate, please visit [www.arizonamethproject.org/takeaction](http://www.arizonamethproject.org/takeaction).

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